

Planners Comments

Getting a full range of enjoyable and readable 'classic' distance courses out of such a narrow area is always going to be a little bit of a challenge. For all the courses I wanted to get runners early into the low visibility and complex contours of Old Hannah Wood and it was the natural choice as the start, particularly given our event centre location. It was quite satisfying to see people clearly finding those short early legs a challenge :) . The aim was to give you as much variety as the course distances allowed; low visibility, old mining features, fast running and, of course, a few slopes. Blue was the natural single lap of the woods so the two longest courses had to go on two sides of the paper to remain readable. For the less technical courses starting in such a complex area is quite tricky and with so many vague paths a white course was out of the question. Even yellow and orange felt at the difficult end of the scale but hopefully were still appreciated.

In the end the event was dominated, albeit not directly, by Storm Babet. Had it arrived 48 hours later we would not have had an event. Friday was too awful even to clean the car park and set us back almost a full day. Saturday was dry but river levels were still high, the slopes the slippiest I have seen them - and several new trees and branches were down. We inspected the likely crossing points as late in the day as we could and then, after a long chat with the controller, decided to leave all the courses unaltered. However for safety we added a recommended crossing point near control 96 (both for ease of crossing and to avoid storm damage) and also have marshal near the stepping stones (which had been entirely underwater, but just crossable, on that Saturday).

I'm sorry we kept you waiting a bit on the day. That was almost entirely my fault; being unexpectedly out at the event centre and woods all day Saturday meant I just wasn't quite organised enough early on Sunday and we started hanging controls at sunrise, not 30 minutes earlier at first light. In the end the first starter went out at 10:50.

It was lovely to be able to spend some time these past two months re-acquainting myself with this little gem of urban woodland. Many thanks to everyone who helped but particularly to Charlie Adams for his support as controller.

Mike Pedley

PS More comments in the separate Mapping Comments